

The Advisers BULLETIN

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Why Not A Better Sports Page?

By Charles F. Troxell

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Because of the prominent position occupied by sports in the life of the average high school student, the adviser to the publication would do well to check over the quality of writing that appears on this page.

At first sight, sports writing looks easy. Most American boys are very familiar with the chief sports: football, baseball, basketball, soccer, track. So much happens that there seems to be plenty of copy available. The sports writers read avidly the stories produced by professionals in the metropolitan papers — and then

proceed to imitate only some parts of the style.

Why then is the quality of sports writing in so many school papers so poor? What can the adviser suggest to the sports writers to improve their stories?

It should be remembered that the opening paragraph of a well-written sports story contains seven essentials although not necessarily in this order: 1—name of the winner, 2—name of the loser, 3—name or indication of the sport, 4—when contest was played, 5—where contest was played, 6—final score, 7—outstanding characteristic of the contest. All of these are essential for the record.

The adviser might suggest to the boy that he examine the daily paper, for example, and see how the opening paragraphs of AP or UP stories handle these seven essentials, especially those stories that contain one, two, or perhaps up to five or six paragraphs. (The date line, of course, takes care of two of the seven.) He should study them carefully for several sports.

Stories of local games in city papers are often far beyond the length of school sport stories, so

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that the writer can go into much greater detail in his opening paragraphs in city papers. The schoolboy is often tempted by the florid style of by-line writers in city dailies, with the result that he overwrites his lead paragraph and forgets some of the seven essentials. Enthusiasm and school patriotism are likely to lead him astray at this point, especially if he has a fairly long story to do.

Having mastered the technique of the seven essentials, the reporter is then ready for the next paragraphs, which should give the scoring highlights of the contest, not forgetting the outstanding opponents' performances, with names of players concerned and accurately spelled. Many school stories stress "our" side only.

With the essentials covered in the lead and the highlights given in the two or more succeeding paragraphs, the writer may then have enough space left in which to get down to the more minor phases of the contest. By then his word allotment may be exhausted.

The deadliest way to kill reader interest is to give a straight, detailed account in chronological order from start to finish, play-by-play. The average reader will quit long before the end.

When several contests are to be covered in one issue, the writer must be exceedingly careful to give most of the seven essentials in the lead, unless he writes a "blanket opener" summarizing the contests covered in the ensuing story. Then the technique is slightly different, but the general idea of writing is the same: give the highlights of scoring plays preference over other facts.

All of the suggestions above have to do with stories of past contests.

How many details can be given will depend on the word length of the assignment.

Stories of future contests require a somewhat different treatment in the lead paragraph, but the writer must keep in mind as many of the seven essentials as fit the situation. Winner, loser, and final score are of course, not in the picture.

Here the writer should pay chief attention to the significance of the coming contest in his opening words, relying on facts and not using ballyhoo. Place, date, and starting time have high importance but are poor openers. First mention of the opponents should give the school names, not merely nicknames, even if these are well-known to the school readers.

The writer of an important story should have at hand a good set of statistical information on the play of the two teams in the current season, their standing in the league, together with accurate information on contests of previous years between the two schools, plus possible stars for spectators to watch. Again, the writer must remember that his own school is not the only one in the game! Names of individual members of the op-

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posing team are too often overlooked. Somewhere in or near the story may be given the record of all past game in that sport between the schools, if accurate information is available for a tabulation.

Writers' opinions on the outcome have no place here, but some good quotes from coaches may be used, if available. Editorializing must be rigidly avoided; there should be enough substantial facts for a good informative story, without recourse to opinion.

From a somewhat broader point of view, the adviser should be on the lookout to see that a complete sports picture is given by the sports page as a whole. Secondary teams and secondary sports deserve attention. If a sports comment column is run, the adviser should be careful to see that fair play is extended and that no one person is featured at the expense of another, perhaps equally deserving of notice. The same might be said with regard to teams as well.

It might be well to exclude all copy having to do with college or professional sports. The sports page, like the other pages, should be for the school and of the school. Now and then schoolboys feel compelled to give their views on college and professional contests. A school usually develops enough news within itself to produce a strong sports page without this copy. Exception might be made in the case of high interest in some local college or university, but even in this case the situation is usually taken care of by the higher institution itself.

Inaccurate writing, of course, has no place in the school sports story. Sometimes inaccuracy may creep in because the adviser does not know the facts. The writer

must be well informed on the techniques of the sports in question. Both adviser and reporter will probably hear from the coach and the team if facts are not accurate.

Slovenly writing should be caught by the student copy-reader and the work of dubiously prepared writers should be double-checked by the adviser. There is no excuse for such things as "The team is ready for their game," so often found.

Each reporter should be rigidly instructed in stylebook usages, so that the paper does not carry Varsity, varsity, Jay Vees, J. V.'s, Jayvees, JV's, the seven-yard line, a 6-yard gain, and other discrepancies of style usage. Similarly the sports staff should adopt standard forms for lineups, summaries, and the like, so that these are uniform throughout the page.

ALL ADVISERS SHOULD GO TO C.S.P.A. CONVENTIONS

As an adviser in the school press field you should go, from time to time, to New York City to the conventions and conferences of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association held at Columbia University. Here are some reasons for so doing.

1. The displays will show you what other schools in your class are doing.
2. By chatting over your problems with other advisers you can learn a lot.
3. The clinics, round-table conferences, etc., you attend can be most helpful.
4. Getting your publication criticized by someone can be very revealing, even though you may not agree with the critic's point of view.

Medalist Yearbook Adviser Lists 10 Ingredients Of Good Copy

By Robert R. Black

"Ingredients of Good Yearbook Copy" was the title of a talk given at the CSPA 1952 Yearbook Conference by Mr. Robert R. Black, adviser to The Karux, the yearbook of The Mercersburg Academy, a boys private school. Mr. Black's talk is here printed because The Karux has been given the medalist, or highest award, in fifteen CSPA yearbook contests.

Some years ago I heard a speaker at one of these section meetings of the CSPA yearbook short course emphasize the idea that your annual should have meaning or coherence not only in the present but also in the future. In other words, what memories will it bring back twenty, thirty, forty, or even fifty years from now? The theme of this conference is Yearbook Are Memory Books, and so they are; this fact seems to be self-evident. If your book does not in the future evoke definite memories of school days, it has failed. With the memory book idea in mind let us consider some aspects of good yearbook copy.

Copy certainly refers to all the contents of any annual. But let us consider only that which we can call "body text." It would seem that the modern tendency runs toward quantitative reduction in text. Captions and running heads or legend are often made to serve the purpose, and they can certainly be effective. A short paragraph, well written, clear and concise, with the lighter touch, if you will, can adequately express the idea. Padding is unnecessary. Of course we know that all copy should be edited to fit the space and should be

prepared for the printer double spaced and typed in black.

Conscious of the fact that there are probably people in this group who have had considerably more experience than I as a yearbook adviser, I should, nevertheless, like to present for your consideration ten points which should make up some of the ingredients of good yearbook copy. We shall consider them as generalities, for the time is too short to consider them in detail.

1. *Your total coverage should be balanced.* This means that each item or activity should receive its proportionate share of treatment. Naturally some activities are of greater importance than others; but I have seen books in which athletics made up at least a third or more of the copy, and the curriculum was completely forgotten. This does not mean that activities which are of special importance to your school should be relegated to secondary position. By this I mean that if cooking, basketweaving, or football are the chief activities, they should receive preferred treatment; but they should not overshadow the main purposes of the school. In some schools certain activities are stressed more than in

others. There is a tendency sometimes on the part of the military schools to over-emphasize the military or on the part of the church school to over-emphasize the church. Divide your space into suitable proportions and then —

2. *Try to integrate your copy with your chosen theme.* Sometimes we find a theme mentioned in the foreword and immediately forgotten, or sometimes it is not very adaptable and has to be dragged into the text here and there by the heels. Treat your theme so that it becomes a frame on which to hang copy that expands and embellishes that theme just as the musician does with his variations and orchestrations. Build your various text on that subject and next —

3. *Arrange your copy or coverage in such a way that you have a unified and logical sequence.* Your book need not string along like an endless compound sentence; your text may have climax within the write-up or within the section. You have all seen books, I am sure, in which the various parts seem to be put together with little or no plan. Running heads or continuous transitions from one article to another as part of a sort of serial can help to put your house in order. Study of any of the better magazines will illustrate the value of unity in the following of a theme. This is particularly true of fashion magazines, of which *Vogue* is a great example. Sometimes it is smart and interesting to have all parts of a given section based on a single plan or sub-theme. For example, I once saw a book in which the school curriculum was treated as a great library where the studies were represent-

ed as volumes. In another book I saw the curriculum treated as a ladder up which the student climbed to graduation. I have seen books where in the whole set up built up to a climax with the senior class at the end, and others where the parts were treated by seasons.

4. *Be thorough.* You can, however, cover the ground without padding your text with words. Tell the essential facts in sufficient detail about each event or activity in straightforward factual manner so that the casual reader from outside either now or in the future may be able to understand what it is about. In the case of organizations you should tell their membership, their aims, and how they carry out those aims to make a real contribution to the life of the school.

5. *The use of clear and concise language gives reader interest.* In the case of events or activities cryptic references which are incoherent to the outside reader are not very effective. Be sure to list the activities of your seniors. I have heard complaints by readers that the staccato or telegraphic style of a certain book was difficult to follow. For example you get something like this: "Mary Smith—Bubbles — Smiles — English and German — Where's Jim? — Convertible Cadillacs — Field Hockey — a full heart maketh a glad man!" When you discuss an event, tell who, when, where, what, and even why. Don't be tempted to editorialize with a flowery plague of adjectives.

6. *Make your copy conform to good English usage.* Certainly yearbooks, which by the way, should be written by students and not by

faculty advisers, need not be in the style of a Carlyle or a Macaulay, but the composition should certainly be correct. Paragraphs which do not obey even the rudiments of good grammar are inexcusable. "But why," you will say, "mention this? Is it not self-evident?" Far from it. You have all doubtless seen copy that was poorly done and childish. Perhaps the editor and adviser were tired, or maybe the head of the school had assigned the yearbook to an unwilling faculty member as a chore. It is the only possible reason I can assign for laxity in this matter; but certainly it is inexcusable nonetheless. In this as in all these principles you want to be proud when you show it to the next generation as your memory book.

7. *Make your copy fresh and live.* Dullness and triteness are not long forgiven by even the average reader. Almost every school has some imaginative writers in it. However, let's agree that the lighter touch is hard to achieve. Sometimes we run the danger of flippancy or merely silliness. Some copy written by eighth graders at times has more that is fresh and natural than the styled language we often get from a high school senior. A free and chatty style without tension is easy to read and attracts the reader. An old trick is to confront the adviser, in the hope he won't notice, with articles which are composites of similar articles of the preceding years. The same is true of the leadoff phrases. One often sees a succession of articles beginning with practically the same phrase or idea. My pet abomination is "under the able direction of."

8. *The writing should be non-*

professional. We can certainly win prizes — I sometimes wonder if this is the sole aim of yearbook work — with professional layout, photography, and writing. This seems unlikely but . . . it happens. A friend of mine, once a yearbook adviser, wrote the greater part of the copy for his book. Isn't that almost professional?

9. *Depict your school and its activities in such a way that they show off to the best advantage within the bounds of honesty.* Psychologists tell us that fortunately the human memory has a tendency to forget the unpleasant things of the past. Your yearbook — memory book — like the sundial should record none but the sunny hours. This can be done and still honestly show your school as it is.

10. *Good taste is necessary.* Good taste is an intangible quality and hard to define; but it is a highly desirable one in all actions or productions. Certainly simplicity and modesty are part of it. The overly elaborate, too much decoration, the gaudy, slightly off-color remarks or innuendoes, the slight jabs in write-ups, pictures or cartoons with a sting in them, and over-abundant use of the class will or prophesy! Good taste is a quality which one feels — it is not, thank heaven, a matter of budget.

In summary, some of the ingredients of good yearbook copy are therefore as follows: 1, Balanced coverage; 2, Integration with a theme; 3, Unity and logical sequence; 4, Thoroughness; 5, Clear and concise style; 6, Within the bounds of good English; 7, Fresh and lively — interesting; 8, Non-professional; 9, Shows off to the best advantage although truthful;

10, In good taste.

'It's In The Book'

Anonymous

The editor of the Bulletin asked a judge, who must remain anonymous, to suggest how some of the yearbooks he judged in the 1952 CSPA contest could be improved.

"It's in the Book!" This popular song title might well be the campaign slogan for an effective yearbook drive.

Since a good annual is a composite summary of the activities of the school year, an alert staff must always be on the lookout for today's highlights. This is essential so that no matter what event is recalled, the staff can proudly say, "Oh, yes, it's in the book."

Complete coverage of the year's events is the first concern of the editorial staff. Omission is more fatal than commission, even when the latter contains an error.

To do justice to "the book" and to escape the caustic censure of their peers, the staff musts avoid the so-called "publications pitfalls" if it would set its sights on "medalist honors." To do so, the following suggestions should be helpful:

1. Select a timely and appropriate theme, synchronized with the art and photography of the book. The annual is a school friend, with personality emanating through lively make-up, informal pictures, interesting copy and purposeful advertisements. A theme that does not make the most of these personable qualities sells its friend short. Such coordinating ideas as the circus, the gay nineties or knighthood days reflect on the staff and on the educational merit of the publication.

2. Striking and significant pictures of the school, the faculty and the students provide an overall

background for the more intimate glimpses of school life. Emphasis should be on activity, and groups should be pictured in natural school situations whenever possible.

3. Next to "pictures that tell a story," copy that scintillates with purposeful and clever phraseology makes the book readable and enjoyable. Too many of the 1952 annuals were ready for burial before the ink was dry, the copy being so dull and lifeless as to hasten rigor mortis.

4. Variety of make-up with

CSPA DIRECTOR RESUMES HIS FULL-TIME ACTIVITIES

Members of the Advisory Board of Columbia Scholastic Press Association and hundreds of members of CSP Advisers Association will rejoice that Dr. Joseph M. Murphy, director of the association since 1925, is now "back on the job" at Columbia University.

His 21 month period of active duty with the air force terminated on December 31.

At Columbia University he has been relieved of his former work as Assistant Director of Admissions to take up a trustees appointment as full-time "Director of the CSPA." This is because the university "has decided that the work of the CSPA is of prime importance in its relations with schools throughout the country."

different patterns for succeeding pages enhances reader interest. Facing pages should be balanced but repetition of make-up should be avoided.

5. To publish a well-balanced book, equal emphasis should be placed on all major activities; minor sports and clubs should be included proportionately. A few of the more recently published annuals missed medalist rating by making the educational curriculum secondary to the athletic program. Keep first things first!

6. Not merely because of skyrocketing prices but because business entrepreneurship demands careful budgeting, economy of materials should be practiced. Planning of layout before picture taking, proper lighting, uniform grouping and cropping are not only money but time savers as well.

7. Functional art is effective if not overdone. A few medalist books integrated the theme, copy and layout through imaginary characters that pulsated life into their annuals. Moderate use of color also adds to the attractiveness of a good book.

8. Since the aim of advertising is to sell merchandise, student modeling may accomplish a three-fold purpose: boost business, increase reader interest, and add zest to the closing section. A few informal student life views are advantageous in this area.

9. One of the best investments of the annual staff is the money

spent on reputable engraving and printing. It is unsound economy to sacrifice either of these for the cover, more pages, or additional color. Sharp engraving can give an otherwise average book a superior appearance.

10. An attractive cover that harmonizes with the theme and is within the budget gives dignity to a well planned annual.

By exerting meticulous care in planning every phase of the publication and using every opportunity to make each page vibrate with life, a staff can be assured of a medalist rating because "It's in the Book!"

3 ADVISERS HELP SCREEN EDITORIALS IN CONTEST

Three school newspaper advisers well known to CSPA screened and classified over 300 editorials entered in a high school newspaper editorial contest sponsored by Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Penna.

The three were Dr. Regis L. Boyle, adviser to The Easterner, Eastern High School, Washington, D. C.; Miss Mary E. Murray, adviser to The Alcohi Mirror, Allegany High School, Cumberland, Md.; and Mr. Charles F. Troxell, adviser Frankford High Way, Frankford High School, Philadelphia.

The editorials came from all parts of this country. The screening took place at the end of November.

Write To The Editor About It If —

If you would like to see an article in this Bulletin about any aspect of the school press work, if you would like to write something yourself, if you know of anyone who could, or should, or wants to write something for this publication, let the editor know about it. His name and address is Mr. Bryan Barker, The Mercersburg Academy, Mercersburg, Penna.

'THE STUDENT SHOULD DO IT, BUT ADVICE HELPS'

By Mildred R. Larson
State Teachers College, Oswego, N. Y.

This paper by the adviser of a newspaper at a state teachers college was originally entitled "Contribution That Advisers Should Make." It was delivered at the March, 1951, convention of CSPA.

A candidate for political office, while striving to find topics on which he might talk without irritating any of his listeners, was told by a friend, "Talk on the tariff."

Very ably that night he concluded his speech thus, "And now the tariff. There is a question we have had with us for years. Some want a low tariff, and others want a high tariff. After giving the subject careful thought, so far as I'm concerned, so do I."

So might I feel were I asked to discuss the question of whether or not a school paper should have an adviser. But my topic allows for no such equivocal stand. Since my subject is the contributions advisers should make, presumably the presence of the adviser is established.

What then is the adviser's part to be in the newspaper? Should he or she allow his name to be attached to the paper without his taking any part in it, on the theory that the paper should be totally student run? Should he, acting on the presumption that he is the source of sound advice, be the actual editor, or rather publisher of the paper, who sets editorial policy and determines the slanting of the news?

Actually, I suppose, accepting a position as adviser imposes a three-fold responsibility. If a faculty member is appointed by the administration to the job, especially if her appointment is part of her

schedule as mine is, she owes consideration to the philosophy of the administration. Since she must work with the students, their needs and desires must be considered; and finally she must act on her own philosophy or must determine before she begins the outcome for which she hopes. You see, I'm talking like a teacher. But you as future teachers must realize that the publishing of a student paper has more outcomes than mere publication in print. An adviser whose eye is on the printed form only seems to me to be like the unfortunate teacher who teaches "for the regents."

As I thought of this three-fold responsibility, I decided to check with my administration and my students what they considered were the contributions I should make. Because I believe their answers were helpful, I should like to share them with you. I do not speak as an expert telling you what an adviser must do. You know what an expert is — someone who crawls slowly and laboriously toward the same goals that you and I reach correctly in one jump — and when he arrives, he isn't sure he is there. I'd rather think aloud with you about the position of the adviser so that you may think out your own views and discuss them later.

First, what might the administration reasonably expect from the adviser? When I questioned my

president, he suggested that the adviser should provide leadership which makes it possible for students to do work effectively without direction from the adviser. She should provide leadership in helping students to discover what college policy is and in letting them assist in extending and formulating that policy without dictation. Perhaps even more definite was his statement that the adviser should make it possible for students to produce a paper as high in quality of writing, appearance, and materials as they are capable of producing. She should aid the students to gear the material to the significant life of the college and to have the material printed in good taste, both in terms of the general mores of our society and in terms of the particular mores of the college and the college community. How she is to accomplish these aims is for the adviser to decide since it is obviously her job.

One way in which she might function was suggested by our Dean of Women, who said that the adviser should hold a goal before the staff of better newspapers — hold ideals of techniques and subject matter before them as ends toward which to strive.

The Dean of Men suggested that the adviser must create a situation wherein a student can write *his newspaper*, and that he must uphold standards of English.

When I had heard these glowing and rosy-hued aims set forth in what I felt to be true terms, I suddenly felt ineffectual as an adviser but still eager to try to perform the job. Like the seven foot tall fellow applying for a life saving job, who was questioned as to whether or not he could swim, I too knew that I must say of my own performance, "Well, no, I

can't swim to do any good, but I can wade like all heck."

From the administrators I turned to my students. What did they think an adviser should contribute? The editor in chief, who had returned from practice teaching, revealed a viewpoint that showed she spoke as a group-conscious student, for she said that the adviser should "make sure that what goes into the paper does not reflect badly on the school." Evidently she had a concept of the paper as a means of building school prestige; but she did not mean to imply that that was the sole purpose which the paper has.

Our business manager had what I might term a more commercial or end-product view of the paper, perhaps because she, like most students, judges the paper mainly by the printed copy she sees — (as well as by the amount she sees expended for that printed copy.) First she suggested that the adviser give advice or a critical analysis of the paper each time that one is issued — a criticism, I understood, of its typography, its contents, editorial slant and reportorial style. Another idea she volunteered was that the adviser should work especially at the beginning of the year and, as she put it, "work her way out." As a third point she listed the idea that advisers should give a course in journalism, if possible, to acquaint prospective staff members with newspaper techniques. Her final point was that the adviser should promote peace and harmony within the staff.

A news editor said pithily that the adviser should "advise when asked," suggesting that the adviser should be handy and approachable for advice when it was needed.

Finally the consulting editor, when approached, stated that he

felt the adviser should have "a background of knowledge" and, therefore, should supply a certain amount of instruction. Mainly she should be someone to "fall back on so that you don't get too scared." Just feeling someone is there is a help. Again he suggested that the adviser is a go-between between the paper and the administration, a position with subtle implications, you will agree. At worst she might be a pacifier for each; at best, a central exchange bureau through which ideas flow. And finally, he suggested that the adviser's control is exercised through authoritarian measures. This presupposes that the adviser-staff relationships make it possible for the adviser's "like and dislikes" to motivate the staff without their feeling that they are being controlled.

As I suggested before, an adviser owes something to the administration, to the newspaper staff, and finally to herself and her own philosophy as to the purpose of the paper in her school. Speaking now for myself, I see our paper first as an organ for disseminating news and views to all students; therefore I must advise my staff how to make their news clear and accurate. Since it is the only campus paper, it must not express the views of one group, except in signed articles, but must express the mind of the student body. This policy, set up by staffs in the past, I must make available in thought to new people who join our staff. In other words, were I to notice signs of cliques or pressure groups, I would feel that advice was needed by the staff. Especially I see the paper as a means of providing enjoyable activity for a group of students interested in newspaper

work and, not to be minimized, as a means of having fun — fun for the staff and for the adviser.

Since we are a teachers' college, we look at the reality that in the organization of the news staff we have a pleasant opportunity for putting into effect the best we know of what education can be. On the newspaper staff, students have the opportunity to meet various problems and solve them for themselves when they can. It is the adviser's job to see that they have the facts they need to solve those problems — knowledge of reportorial techniques and typography. Since none of our students have this knowledge when they join the staff, I feel a responsibility to acquaint them with the pyramid style, headline counting, writing captions and legends, etc., etc. The students want to do a good job and want to know how, I feel. Then when the reporters lean on the news editors, the news editors on the editors, I should become, I suppose, a sounding board for the editors when they are looking for help and even a place to which a bewildered staff member may bring a lay-out problem or headline question.

Actually the thesis which I hold is that the students should not only be allowed but be encouraged to do all that they can by themselves, and that the adviser must be not a dictator or even leader, but must be a "present help in time of need." Students should be able to make use of the adviser to learn what they want to know.

A little girl, asked by her teacher what makes flowers grow said, "God does it but fertilizer helps." Paraphrasing her I should say, "The student should do it, but advice helps."

Notes From C S P A Office

The CSPAA made a survey of its membership in 1948 to determine what contribution the Advisers were making out of their own time and substance to the work they were doing for their schools. This was widely distributed and calls still come to the CSPA office for copies. One recent letter stated, "We have never stopped talking about the trip to the Twenty-Fifth Convention. We have been trying to attend another Convention ever since. But we have not been successful in cultivating genuinely interested persons on the school board. They won't excuse a teacher *with pay* to attend the Convention."

It does seem inconsistent with normal thinking for school authorities to accept with little or no thanks the efforts teachers put into publishing and financing a paper and object to their being paid for a day or two lost to teaching when they finance a trip to New York with a delegation of students. In this particular instance it was a trip of more than 600 miles. If for no other reason, the authorities might have considered the matter of a gesture of professional good will.

Mrs. Elizabeth Sheffield of the Kozminski School, and treasurer of the Elementary Press Association of Chicago, took a 56-day cruise to South Africa this past summer. Mrs. Sheffield is a veteran traveller. Each summer sees her in some far off part of the world. By this time she has to her record nearly everything worth seeing or that anyone has heard of. In between, she makes a trip to New York in March

to give her help to the Elementary Division and to lend it the inspiration of her presence.

"School newspapers give too much attention to the side-shows of education — sports, dramatics, debate, and social news, and neglect the main educational activities," Dean J. L. O'Sullivan of the College of Journalism, Marquette University, told the delegates to the northwestern regional convention of the Catholic Press Association held at Aquinas High School, La Crosse, Wis., on October 3. "The effect of emphasizing the unimportant and failing to stress the important, results in student readers assuming that the side-shows are the most important parts of school life."

The 29th Annual Convention — which no one wants to miss — will be held at Columbia University on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 12, 13 and 14, 1953. The Invitations will be in the mail early in January. While the Association can't promise to repeat the great event of 1952, there is every indication to believe the luncheon speaker will be a man of distinction in his chosen field and well worth hearing.

Do you ever have to search around to find out the date of an event last year, or next year? One of the handiest items for an editor's desk or for an Adviser's reference is the "Calendar for 200 Years" published by the Master Reporting Service, 51 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. It has only 16 pages, and cover, 4 x 6½, and costs 25c.

Guide To Good Books

By Hans Christian Adamson

(Colonel, U. S. Air Force, retired. Author in the fields of aviation, astronomy, popular science, biography, history, transportation, nature, etc. The reviews appearing in this Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association Bulletin, published quarterly at Columbia University in the City of New York, are also distributed to four hundred United States Armed Services libraries in thirty-six Commands throughout the world.)

At this time of human existence, when the minds of men of many creeds travel to ancient Jerusalem, what would make better reading — or a better gift to anyone, anywhere, than a Bible story book for all ages. Such a book is *Story of The Bible* by Dr. Jesse L. Hurlbut (Winston). This Anniversary Edition of a book first published in 1904 is richly illustrated including 32 full color reproductions of works of art by Domenico Mastroianni. They relate the life of Christ from Bethlehem to Golgotha. The book — soon to reach its 3,000,000 copy — contains 168 easy-to-read Bible stories.

* * *

In the old days, in the Old Country, when it rained, they let it rain. But now-a-days, they blast the clouds out of the tame blue yonder and order cloud-bursts by the yards. Two interesting books on wind and weather are *Wind, Storm and Rain* (Coward, McCann) by Denning Miller, and *The Weather Book* (Duell, Sloan and Pease — Little Brown) by Eric Sloane. The latter is wonderfully illustrated.

* * *

A sane, sober and yet colorful

and lively story about the making of a motion picture empire and the ways of movie emperors is told by Robert Carson in *The Magic Lantern* (Holt). Unusual in that its Hollywood background is free from vituperation and extravagant condemnation or praise. Don't wait for the pix. The book is worth the price of admission twice over.

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Unique in its treatment of the career story of several top-hole executives whose promotions depend upon the death of The Big Shot is *Executive Suite* by Cameron Hawley (Houghton, Mifflin). Avery Bullard, a money-master, drops dead in the street. From that moment, until he is identified several hours later, the author spins a yarn of intrigue and greed that keeps the reader chained to his seat.

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Tom Lea, whose "Brave Bulls" struck a strong note, has hit the bell again with *The Wonderful Country* (Little, Brown). Martin Brady, a Texan whose guns could be for hire, is the central figure of this novel of cattle-riding and stealing in the 1870s which cross

from Texas to Chihuahua; from New Mexico to Sonora. Swift runner-up is Brady's black stallion — Lagrimas. Wonderful drawings by Tom Lea.

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Chances are that Peter Bourne fans will forgive — and certainly forget — *Gateway to Fortune* (Putman) a rather so-so story about cloak and dagger activities back of the building of the Panama Canal. The historical background and engineering treatment justifies the book.

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The high cost of compromise between honesty and corruption is clearly laid bare in *Caesar's Angel* (World) by Mary-Anne Amsbary. It uses the rise and fall of a second generation American as a political power in a mid-West American city as the track for the running of a rather tragic train full of a lot of interesting if not entirely likeable people.

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After you have drilled and blasted your way through the loud confusion of *The Dickey Bird Was Singing* (Rinehart) about men, women and black gold, you are at least sure of two things. To wit: that author Bob Duncan—a writing wild-catter — is a crackerjack storyteller and knows oil and its drama through all levels of its dramatic viscosity. A story of pipe-lines and ditto dreams; a saga of derricks. Told before, but never like this.

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An off-the-beaten-path tale in the annals of crime is Charles Hamilton's collection of "dated" crook stories called *Men of the Underworld* (MacMillan). From pre-Revolutionary "hos' thieves" to

post-World War racketeers, Mr. Hamilton traces the pattern of the out-laws' progress in the eternal battle between criminals and police.

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If nothing else, *Sironia, Texas*, is the largest and most expensive novel ever written about Lone Star Staters. Two volumes, 840,000 words, it deals with the lives and population of a small Texas town named Sironia and such side-lights as lynchings, oil booms, politics, love and long-horn cattle. (Houghton-Mifflin). A peculiar but not at all wasted experience in the realm of reading.

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Smoky Mountain Country (Duell, Sloan and Pearce) by North Callahan is the kind of a pipe-and-arm-chair reading, men usually look for but rarely find. Here is the story about what traditionally is called God's Own Country — mountains, woods, farms, creeks, dales and dells. The subject is the Smoky region from the time of Andrew Jackson up to the whistle-stop campaign train, from Sevier to Oak Ridge. And what a story! And how well it is told!! Absorbing. Wonderful. Heartwarming. The perfect present for any boy at any age. The older and younger the better.

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If you take the rising power of crime-tinted politicians and corrupt police seriously — and if you don't you should — read *Mafia* (Random) by Ed Reid. This fact-based fiction-free analysis of a ruthless gang that runs the crime syndicate is loaded with gooseflesh. Its on-the-record accounts of criminal plots against honest society makes TV crime writers appear like Sunday School scripters.

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Harlan Major — one of our most outstanding and articulate fishermen — is author of *Fishing Behind the Eight Ball* (Stackpole). Goaded on by such seasoned "salts" as "Sink 'Em All" author Charles A. Lockwood, Vice Adm. USN Ret., Mr. Major has produced an entertaining and instructive volume on salt-water fishing as engaged in by U. S. servicemen on watery fronts during World War II. The author collected thousands of rods, tens of thousands of "flies" and enough fishline to reach from the moon to Peoria to help entertain servicemen in lulls between combats. All major fish books are good books. This is no exception.

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The old-time sensation of tingling adventure that we associate with the bookworm's view of sailing ships pops into focus with *Sea Fever* (Crowell) by A. H. Rasmussen, a sea-dog who relates his deep-sea adventures from the North Sea to the Spice Islands. A man of many loves — Caroline, Leonore and other ships.

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Frederick Lewis Allen has so many book-length feathers in his cap that it must look like Hedda Hopper's Easter bonnet. The brightest and newest plume of all is *The Big Chance* (Harper). This portrait of America from 1900 to 1950 begins with The Old Order of horse and buggy re-call. It speeds on through changes of industry, society, culture and concept to the New America. Mr. Allen concludes that the changes wrought in 50 years are all to the

good. He believes we have moved private initiative past the shoals of socialism. And who are we to say him nay?

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For several years I have been watching the writings of the not so old Mr. Philip Hamburger not so long ago. He has the air of a writer moving toward great and glorious destiny. Happy am I to say that he reaches the fringe of that rare realm in *J. P. Marquand, Esq.* (Houghton-Mifflin). This pioneering approach in presenting the biography of a great writer achieves in itself a bit of greatness by virtue of its almost mirror-like reflection of the subject upon the reader. Here is a heaping helping of who-is-who that looks, tastes and chews like top-notch fiction. Congratulations! And, another helping, Mr. Hamburger, soon, please.

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Two books of Lincolniana are before us this season. One *Steamboat On The River* (William Sloane) by Darwin Teilhet deals with Lincoln in his early days as a part-time river-pilot. The other *Abraham Lincoln* (Knopf) by Benjamin P. Thomas. The book, according to its publisher is a "publishing event of the first magnitude." Mr. Knopf predicts that "Thomas' Lincoln" will become in this generation what "Charnwood's Lincoln" was before its advent. Beautifully written. Carefully assembled. Handsomely illustrated.

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The cold but no longer silent and solitary North is with us in *The Face of the Arctic* by Richard Harrington (Schuman). Here is a well illustrated tale of a cameraman's five journeys into sub-polar

Canada. A fine pictorial documentary job done by an expert.

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To be candid, I felt a bit fearful when I tackled Sidney Franklin's auto-biography called *Bullfighter From Brooklyn* (Prentice-Hall, Illustrated). But my qualms were wasted. In handling the various aspects of his colorful and danger-laden life, the world-famed American Matador was as skilled as in the handling of his sword, muletta or swirling cape. The amazing journey of a Brooklyn born youth from a hum-drum big-city life to the blaze of the star role in the bull-rings of the Old World and the New makes fascinating reading.

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Sorry to say that I found James Norman Hall's autobiography *My Island Home* (Little, Brown) dull as the brackpools at low tide. Strange that the man who wrote of romance with such skill should have so little for his own patina. Or, perchance, not so strange. Hall was basically a would-be recluse who in his search for solitude never found the remoteness he sought.

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Rand McNally's new *Premier World Atlas* comes at a time when it seems safe — for a while at least — to change new maps for old. At any rate, these famous map-makers issue a volume of 128 large-page six color maps, plus more than 100 pages of historical, geographical and economic information beautifully indexed. But according to Mark Twain "Illinois is always green." How come it changed shades?

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SHORT SIDELIGHTS — *Hunter* (Harper) by J. A. Hunter is life history of African professional Big

Game Killer. — *Sportsman's Country* (Houghton Mifflin) is Donald C. Peattie at his best as nature writer. — *Fill 'Er Up* (McGraw Hill) by Bellamy Partridge covers 50 years since "Git-a-horse" days of motoring. — *American Fisherman's Guide* (Prentice). All inclusive presentation of American salt and fresh-water fish. Edited by Bill Bueno. — *Book of Pets* (Wyn). Brandt House once more comes up with fascinating pet pictures ranging from kittens to kangaroos. — *The Boy Mechanic* (Simon, Schuster). If it sails, flies, rolls or even just moves and belongs in the world of home-made toys or models it is here by way of Popular Mechanics. — *Court of Last Resort* (Sloan). Erle Stanley Gardner reports of efforts by himself and associates to free men unjustly held in prison. — *Public Relations* (University of Oklahoma). Ed L. Bernays tells publicity experts how to become Press Agents. — *Story of Football* (Vanguard). Lamont Buchanan makes an end-run to early days of football and scores an overall touchdown. — John Forest, financial editor of the New York Times, with Evelyn Colby has written a good guide for people who face the sunset years, entitled *Ways And Means To Successful Retirement* (Forbes). It delves into all income brackets. — A last word of solid warning — if you fail to pay attention to Currier and Ives' *America* (Crown) edited by Colin Simkin, you're missing one of the best illustrated text books ever produced. Here, in 12" by 16" color illustrations is the gay panorama of our land when the nation was young and seemingly gay. Old favorite C. & E. prints blend with some that are rare and seldom seen.

